

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-18 are active in this application, Claims 1 and 9 having been amended and Claims 17-18 added by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action Claims 1, 3-8, 9 and 11-16 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Hossack et al (US 5,944,666); and Claims 1-2 and 9-10 were rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Tickner et al (U.S. 6,224,554 B1).

In light of the several grounds for rejection, Claims 1 and 9 have been amended and Claims 17-18 added to clarify features believed to be more clearly patentably distinguishing over the cited art. No new matter has been added.

In particular, amended Claim 1 is directed to an ultrasonic diagnosis apparatus which includes a controller which controls a driving signal generator to transmit first and second ultrasonic waves to destroy bubbles of a contrast medium based on the size of the bubbles, whereby it is possible to generate different frame images in accordance with the sizes of the bubbles of the contrast medium. To that end, amended Claim 1 recites:

... a controller for controlling said driving signal generator in such a manner that said ultrasonic probe transmits a first ultrasonic wave used to destroy bubbles of said contrast medium and a second ultrasonic wave *used to destroy at least part of bubbles each of which substantially has a size larger than a size of each of the bubbles destroyed by said first ultrasonic wave* and are flowing in blood in a blood vessel within said subject to be diagnosed.

Applicants respectfully submit that neither Hossack. et al. nor Tickner. et al. disclose or suggest an ultrasonic diagnosis apparatus provided with the recited controller.

On the contrary, Hossack et al. teach first irradiating a first region with first ultrasonic waves, and then irradiating a second region (which is different from the first region) with

second ultrasonic waves (which are lower in power/frequency than the first ultrasonic waves). Hossack et al. do not teach generating different frame images in accordance with the sizes of the bubbles of the contrast medium, as recited in Claim 17, and do not suggest or obviate the controller recited in Claim 1 whereby different frame images in accordance with the sizes of the bubbles of the contrast medium are generated.

Tickner et al. teach irradiates a predetermined region with first ultrasonic waves, and then irradiating the same region with second ultrasonic waves (which are higher in power than the first ultrasonic waves), so as to completely eliminate bubbles that were not destroyed by the irradiation of the first ultrasonic waves. Applicant respectfully submits that Tickner et al. do not teach generating different frame images in accordance with the sizes of the bubbles of the contrast medium, as recited in Claim 17, and likewise do not suggest or obviate the controller recited in Claim 1 whereby different frame images in accordance with the sizes of the bubbles of the contrast medium are generated.

In view of the above-noted distinctions, it is respectfully submitted that amended Claim 1, and Claims 2-8 and 17 dependent therefrom, patentably define over Hossack et al. and Tickner et al. whether these references are considered alone or in combination. For similar reasons, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 10-16 and 18 likewise patentably distinguish over these references.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above comments, it is believed that no further issues are outstanding and that the present application is in

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condition for allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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